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General Assembly
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Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-eighth year

Identical letters dated 10 May 2013 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I regret to inform you of the ongoing rise in tensions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as Israel, the occupying Power, continues its illegal policies and continues to permit the lawlessness of its illegal settlers. Such hostile, unlawful actions continue to provoke the Palestinian people and to poison the atmosphere between the two sides at a time when all efforts are being exerted regionally, internationally and by the Palestinian leadership to salvage the prospects for a peaceful solution based on two States, Palestine and Israel, living side by side in peace and security on the basis of the pre-1967 borders.

Once again, we convey our grave concerns regarding illegal Israeli measures in Occupied East Jerusalem that are clearly aimed at isolating the city from its natural Palestinian environs and altering the demographic composition and religious, cultural and historical character, identity and landscape of the city. We are particularly alarmed by and condemn ongoing illegal and aggressive actions at and around the holy sites, especially Al-Haram Al-Sharif and Al-Aqsa Mosque.

In this regard, on 8 May, the same day that Israel detained the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Sheikh Muhammad Ahmad Hussein, an act further aggravating religious sensitivities, thousands of Israeli settlers descended upon Occupied East Jerusalem in a vulgar display of extremism, hatred and racism. Those settlers were partaking in the so-called "Jerusalem day", a day provocatively designated by the occupying Power to mark its illegal, de facto annexation of the city. The actions of the settlers, which included the harassment and intimidation of Palestinian civilians and the chanting of racist and threatening slogans aimed at incitement, stoked already high tensions in the City and led to several clashes. Also, Israeli occupying forces, typically acting to protect the extremist settlers, assaulted several protesting Palestinian civilians and journalists covering the incident and detained at least 15 people.

At the same time, Israel continues its illegal settlement activities throughout the State of Palestine in violation of international law and United Nations resolutions,

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in arrogant disrespect of the global calls for a complete cessation of such activities and in total contradiction to the objective of reaching a two-State solution on the basis of the pre-1967 borders. This week, Israeli Government approval of plans for nearly 300 additional settlement units in the illegal settlement of "Beit El" just north of the city of Ramallah was revealed. These plans follow the evacuation of settlers from an outpost in the area last year and would result in a one-third expansion of the settlement.

We condemn such illegal actions and call for the rescinding of these plans and the cessation of all Israeli settlement activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. These actions only further confirm the occupying Power's refusal to cease its colonization and occupation of Palestinian land and to abide by its legal obligations, and underscore its disingenuous intentions regarding the peace process.

Bringing a complete end to the military occupation that began in 1967 requires that Israel act consistently with the tenets of peace, in both word and deed, and that it not speak out of one side of its mouth while continuing to behave with total lawlessness on the ground. This demands a stop to the settlement enterprise in all its manifestations, including the expansion of settlements, the establishment of outposts, the construction of the wall, the confiscation of land, the demolition of homes and the displacement of Palestinians, as well as serious measures to halt the terror and destruction that continues to be perpetrated by Israeli settlers against the Palestinian people and their homes, farms, orchards and religious sites.

We call on members of the international community, foremost among them the Security Council, to make these demands clear to Israel. Such demands are in line with international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention and the human rights covenants, with relevant United Nations resolutions, including of the Security Council itself, and with the longstanding terms of reference of the Middle East peace process. As has been widely recognized, we are at a critical juncture in the efforts to revive that process, making it imperative that Israel, the occupying Power, genuinely and tangibly affirm its claimed commitment to peace and the two-State solution. Otherwise, we shall soon find ourselves at a point where we must seriously face the alternatives.

The present letter is in follow-up to our previous 463 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 8 May 2013 (A/ES-10/590-S/2013/272), constitute a basic record of the crimes committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations